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Director of Training

12 May 1958

Plans and Policy Staff

Comments on Department of State
Language Incentive ProgramDocument No. 667NO CHANGE in Class. ☐☐ DECLASSIFIED

Class. CHANGED TO: TS S (C)

DDA Memo. 4 Mar 77

Auth: DDA REG. 77/1735

Date: 5 JAN 79 By: 628

1. DTR instructed PPS to point out anything in the State language incentive program that we feel is superior to our own. There seemed to be at least four desirable features in the State program which we might consider for adoption. These are:

(a) State's highest incentive payments are for actual use of the language in certain foreign countries. I believe this parallels the British system, which gives awards only for actual usage abroad. In this way the learning does not become an end in itself, which may or may not have eventual utility to the Organization. Such a system might also eliminate one area of resentment toward OTR in that not infrequently one encounters Clandestine Services employees who feel they have been penalized for mastering a language in the field. Such a system might also offset a tendency to fail to learn or deny knowledge of the out-of-the-way languages for fear it will lead to being stuck in obscure posts for the rest of one's career.

(b) State appears to award only on proficiency or achievement, not on effort, as might be said of our preliminary, intermediate, and advanced system of awards. State's intermediate and advanced awards system should be easier to evaluate and administer and might inspire more confidence in the program. Until an employee obtains at least an intermediate level command of a language, it is unlikely it will be of any real benefit to our Organization.

(c) The concept of a per annum ceiling on the amount a given individual can receive seems sound. State uses \$1800. Under our system there is the risk of abuse by the employee not too busy in his job improperly devoting on-the-job time to voluntary study.

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(d) State's program appears to be entirely on a directed basis. We should not go this far. I believe CIA gets a great deal from our voluntary effort. At the same time, defining certain languages for directed training in terms of need of the Agency would be an efficient way to administer the program and might serve the useful purpose of eliminating some possibly undesirable conflict in student enrollment between formal and voluntary programs.

2. The above is only a superficial response to your direction. It is believed that the suggestions made would be helpful and could be implemented without too much difficulty by IAS and the Registrar. I find them both disposed to improve the program more or less along the lines suggested. Unless you desire otherwise, we will refer this matter to [REDACTED] of the Management Staff to assist him in his procedural survey of our language training activities.

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